

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,318,254 to Shaw et al. in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication 20030043964 to Sorenson and U.S. Patent 6,378,387 issued to Froom. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

The present invention provides an inspection system in which a remotely controlled robotic vehicle is controlled by a control station based on control data supplied to the robotic vehicle from the control station. The control data is based on a three dimensional model of a space in which the remote controlled vehicle is to operate and in which the structure to be examined by the remote control vehicle is located. The Examiner readily admits that neither Shaw et al. nor Shorenson discloses or suggests the concept of controlling a robotic vehicle utilizing control data that is based on a three dimensional space model. To overcome this deficiency, the Examiner relies on Froom as teaching "the control of an inspection apparatus in three dimensional space *in which the vehicle is to operate*" (Emphasis Added), and then suggests the teachings of Froom can be applied to the primary references to arrive at the claimed invention. The Examiner's characterization of Froom is entirely incorrect.

Froom discloses an inspection system in which the inspection devices are mounted on large carriages coupled to masts that are supported by a building structure. Froom does not utilize a three dimensional space model *in which a vehicle is to operate*, because Froom does not disclose or suggest the use of a robotic vehicle as claimed. In Froom, data points at which the masts and carriages are to be positioned are predefined by their attachment points with relation to the building structure. Thus, Froom has no need to model a three dimensional space in which an autonomous robotic control vehicle must be negotiated around the structure to be inspected. Since Froom is not directed to the use of autonomous robotic vehicles, the teaching of Froom are not applicable to the systems disclosed in Shaw et al. or Shorenson, both of which are directed to robotic vehicles. The Examiner's assertion that the teachings of Froom would therefore suggest the utilization of control data as claimed does not logically follow. Accordingly, the combination of references proposed by the Examiner is improper. Further, even if the references could somehow be properly combined, the result could not yield the claimed invention, as none of the references discloses the use of control data based on a three dimensional model of a space in which the remote controlled robotic vehicle is to operate and in which the structure is located.

The remaining claims in this case stand rejected based on the references discussed above in combination with other secondary references. Applicants submit there is no need to address the merits of the Examiner's arguments with respect to these claims, as none of the secondary references overcomes the deficiencies of the primary references discussed above with respect to claims 1 an 5.

Conclusion

Applicants submit that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance, and thus urge the examiner to issue an early Notice of Allowance. Should the examiner have any issues concerning this reply or any other outstanding issues remaining in this application, applicants urge the examiner to contact the undersigned to expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 01/10/05



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